

I call on you to hold an official public hearing in my state.

Before the disastrous 2003 decision to weaken media ownership rules (which a federal court has now overturned), you held only one official public hearing. Further, FCC officials met behind closed doors 71 times with major broadcasters – but only five times with public interest groups. And to justify your actions, you used deceptive, industry-sponsored research data.

The will of Big Media had been heeded at the expense of American citizens and democracy itself. This has to end. Before you rewrite the ownership rules, I demand an official public FCC hearing in my state, impartial and verifiable research, and transparent debates.

It is time to put the needs of democracy – a diverse, skeptical, independent and competitive media system – ahead of profit-hungry media giants.

As the EAS system exists, most of the public will never receive the message. The FCC currently mandates the cable carries transmit all EAS messages including weekly and monthly tests, on all of its channels. This includes the local stations. The result is local station programming is interrupted with information on a weekly basis with information that is inaccurate. The cable companies tell viewers to go to a cable station for further information. When this is sent over a local station's signal the viewer is being told to go to a channel other than the local station, normally a commercial cable news channel. As we have experienced in many natural disasters the cables between the cable company and the viewer's homes are damaged and not capable of carrying any information or the EAS message, while the local stations are capable of transmitting the EAS message. If your intent is to provide the EAS information to the largest number of people the mandate needs to be changed. A very simple change limiting the cable companies from inserting their EAS messages into a local station's transmission will stop the confusion of the viewers and give all viewers the correct information from the local station not a news channel which is usually miles away from the affected area.